

Appl. No. 10/045,279
Amdt. dated 11/07/2005
Reply to Office Action of 08/15/2005

REMARKS

Claims 1 - 20 are pending. In this Office Action, the Examiner rejected the pending claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Cargile.

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the interview of November 07, 2005. In that interview, the invention and the applied reference were discussed. After Applicants' attorney has explained the gist of the invention to the Examiner, the Examiner thought that the claims were overly broad since there are presently in the field evaluation or trial programs that a user cannot use without buying the programs after the evaluation or trial period has elapsed. Applicants' attorney agreed that the independent claims, as originally drafted, may read on those programs. Consequently, the claims are amended to distinguish the claimed invention from those programs.

Applicants' attorney has also amended the SPECIFICATION to correct a few typographical/grammatical errors. For the reasons stated more fully below, Applicants believe that the claims in the Application are allowable over the applied reference. Hence, reconsideration, allowance and passage to issue are respectfully requested.

The present invention provides an apparatus and method of limiting the amount of time an application program may be used in a day. In accordance with the teachings of the invention, the first time on a day a user begins execution of an application program, a timer starts to run. When the timer registers a time that is equal to a predetermined

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time, the execution of the program stops. The timer is reset the following day.

As stated in the SPECIFICATION, the invention is particularly useful in a home environment where minors live. For example, using the invention a parent may restrict the use of certain non-school-related application programs by a minor for a certain amount of time each day.

The invention is set forth in claims of varying scopes of which Claim 1 is illustrative.

1. A method of limiting a daily usage of an application program by a user comprising the steps of:
starting a timer upon first execution of the application program by the user in a day;
stopping execution of the application program when the timer registers a time equal than a pre-determined time; and
resetting the timer the following day. (Emphasis added.)

As stated above, the Examiner rejected the claims under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Cargile, Applicants respectfully disagree.

Cargile purports to teach a solid state key for controlling access to computer software. According to the teachings of Cargile, a key is used to control access to a software program resident in a computer. The key is made of a semiconductor device that includes a continuously running pulse generator that produces an output representative of real time, a shift register in which a unique number is permanently stored and circuitry for

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executing an algorithm that combines real time and the permanently stored unique number to produce a password.

When a user wants to access a program, the user is prompted to enter the password from the key into the computer within which the program is to execute. The computer is coded to execute an equivalent algorithm to generate a password. The password entered by the user and the password generated by the computer are compared to each other and access to the computer program is afforded only if they bear a prescribed relationship (e.g., if the two passwords are the same).

However, Cargile does not teach, show or suggest the steps of *starting a timer upon the first execution of the application program in a day, to stop the execution of the application program when the timer registers a time equal than a pre-determined time and to reset the timer the next day as claimed.*

Consequently, Applicants submit that Claim 1, as presently drafted, and its dependent claims are allowable. The other independent claims and their dependent claims, which all incorporate the emboldened-italicized limitations in the above-reproduced Claim 1, are also allowable. Consequently, Applicants once more request reconsideration, allowance and passage to issue of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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